

[CHEAP REPOSITORY.] [No. VIII]

T H E

Two Wealthy Farmers;
Or, the History of
Mr. BRAGWELL.

P A R T - IV.



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AS soon as it was told, Bragwell again said softly to Worthy, "Five from fifty, and there remain forty-five. The dinner and drink won't cost me five pounds, and I have got fifty more than the land was worth. Spend a shilling to gain a pound, this is what I call practical Arithmetic, Mr. Worthy."

Mr. Worthy was glad to get out of this scene; and seeing that his friend was quite sober, he resolved as they rode home to deal plainly with him. Bragwell had found out among his calculations, that some sins could only be committed by a prudent man one at a time. For instance, he knew that a man could not well get rich and get drunk at the same moment, but he had found out that some vices made very good company together; so, while he had watched himself in drinking, lest he should become as unfit to sell as his guests were to buy, he had indulged without measure in the good dinner he had provi-

ed. Mr. Worthy, I say, seeing him
 able to bear reason, rebuked him for this
 day's proceedings with some severity.
 Bragwell bore his reproofs with that sort
 of patience which arises from an opinion
 one's own wisdom, and a recent flush
 of prosperity. He behaved with that good-
 humour which grows out of vanity and
 good luck. " You are too squeamish, Mr.
 Worthy," said he, " I have done nothing
 discreditable. These men came with their
 boxes open. There is no compulsion used.
 They are free to bid or to let it alone. I
 make them welcome, and I shall not be
 brought a bit the worse of to-morrow,
 when they are sober. Others do it be-
 fore me, and I shall never be ashamed of
 my thing as long as I have custom on my
 side."

Worthy. " I am sorry, Mr. Bragwell,
 to hear you support such practices by such
 arguments. There is not perhaps a more
 dangerous snare to the souls of men than
 to be found in that word CUSTOM. It
 is a word invented to reconcile corruption
 with credit and sin with safety. But
 custom, no fashion, no combination
 of men to set up a false standard can ever

make a wrong action right. That a thing is often done, is so far from a proof of its being right, that it is the very reason which will set a thinking man to inquire if it be not really wrong, lest he should be following " a multitude to do evil." Right is right, though only one man in a thousand pursues it, and wrong will be for ever wrong, though it be the allowed practice of the other nine hundred and ninety-nine. If this shameful custom is really common, which I can hardly believe, that is a fresh reason why a conscientious man should set his face against it. And I must go so far as to say (you will excuse me Mr. Bragwell) that I see no great difference in the eye of conscience, whatever there may be in the eye of law, between your making a man lose his reason, and then getting 50 guineas out of his pocket *because* he has lost it, and your picking the fifty guineas out of his pocket, if you had met him dead drunk in his way home to-night. Nay, he who meets a man already drunk and robs him, commits but one sin, while he who makes him drunk first that he may rob him afterwards, commits two."

Bragwell gravely replied, "Mr. Worthy, while I have the practice of people of credit to support me, and the law of the land to protect me, I see no reason to be ashamed of any thing I do."—"Mr. Bragwell, answered Worthy, a truly honest man is not always looking sharp about him, to see how far custom and the law will bear him out; if he be honest on principle he will consult the law of his conscience, and if he be a Christian he will consult the written law of God.

Notwithstanding this rebuff, Mr. Bragwell got home in high spirits, for no arguments could hinder him from feeling that he had the 50 guineas in his purse. As soon as he came in, he threw the money he had received on the table, and desired his wife to lock it up. Instead of receiving it with her usual satisfaction, she burst into a violent fit of passion, and threw it back to him. "You may keep your cash yourself, said she. It is all over: we want no more money. You are a ruined man! A wicked creature, scraping and working as we have done for her!" Bragwell trembled, but durst not ask what he dreaded to hear. His wife spared him

the trouble, by crying out, as soon as her rage permitted, "Polly is gone off!" Poor Bragwell's heart sunk within him; he grew sick and giddy, and as his wife's rage swallowed up her grief, so in his grief he almost forgot his anger. The purse fell from his hand, and he cast a look of anguish upon it, finding, for the first time, that it could not relieve his misery.

Mr. Worthy, who though much concerned, was less discomposed now, called to mind that the young lady had not returned with her mother and sister the night before: he begged Mrs. Bragwell to explain the sad story. She, instead of soothing her husband, fell to reproaching him. "It is all your fault, said she, you were a fool for your pains. If I had had my way, the girls never would have kept company with any but men of substance." "Mrs. Bragwell," said Worthy, "If she has chosen a bad man, it would be still a misfortune, even though he had been rich." "O that would alter the case," said she; "*a fat sorrow is better than a lean one.* But to marry a beggar!" Here Miss Betsey who stood fallenly by, put in a word,

and said, “ her sister, however, had not disgraced herself by having married a Farmer or a Tradesman, she had at least made choice of a Gentleman.” “ What marriage! what Gentleman,” cried the afflicted father. “ Tell me the worst !” He was now informed that his darling daughter was gone off with a strolling player, who had been acting in the neighbouring villages lately. Miss Betsey again put in, saying, “ he was no stroller, but a gentleman in disguise, who only acted for his own diversion,” “ Does he so,” said the now furious Bragwell, “ then he shall be transported for mine. At this moment a letter was brought him from his new son-in-law, who desired his leave to wait upon him, and implore his forgiveness. He owned he had been shopman to a haberdasher, but thinking his person and talents ought not to be thrown away upon trade, and being also a little behind hand he had taken to the stage with a view of making his fortune. That he had married Miss Bragwell entirely for love, and was sorry to mention so paltry a thing as money, which he despised, but that his wants were pressing, his landlord, to whom he was in debt, having been so vulgar as

to threaten to send him to prison. He ended with saying, "I have been obliged to shock your daughter's delicacy, by confessing my unlucky real name; I believe I owe part of my success to my having assumed that of Augustus Frederick Theodosius. She is inconsolable at this confession, which, as you are now my father. I must also make to you, and subscribe myself, with many blushes, your dutiful son,

TIMOTHY INCLE."

"O," cried the afflicted father, as he tore the letter in a rage. "Miss Bragwell married to a strolling actor! How shall I bear it?" "Why, I would not bear it at all," cried the enraged mother. "I would never see her, I would never forgive her. I would let her starve at one corner of the barn, while that rascal, with all those Pagan, popish names, was ranting away at the other." "Nay," said Miss Betsey, "If he is only a shopman, and if his name be really Timothy Inkle; I would never forgive her neither. But who would have thought it by his looks, and by his monstrous genteel behaviour."

"Come, come," said Mr. Worthy, "were he really an honest haberdasher, I should think there was no other harm done, except the disobedience of the thing. Mr. Bragwell, this is no time to blame you, or hardly to reason with you. I feel for you sincerely. I ought not perhaps, just at present, to reproach you for the mistaken manner in which you have bred up your daughters. Your error has brought its punishment along with it. You now see, because you now feel, the evil of a false education. It has ruined your daughter, your whole plan has led to some such end. The large sums you spent to qualify them as you thought for a high station, could do them nothing but harm, while your habits of life properly confined them to company of a lower station. While they were better dressed than the daughters of the first gentry, they were worse taught than the daughters of your plowmen. Their vanity has been raised by excessive finery, and kept alive by excessive flattery. Every evil temper has been fostered by indulgence. Their pride has never been controled. Their self-will has never been turned. Their idleness has laid them open to every temptation, and their

abundance has enabled them to gratify every desire. Their time, that precious talent, has been entirely wasted. Every thing they have been taught to do is of no use, while they are utterly unacquainted with all which they ought to have known. I deplore Miss Polly's false step. That she should have married a run-away shopman, turned stroller, I truly lament. But for what husband was she qualified? For the wife of a Farmer she was too idle. For the wife of a tradesman she was too expensive. For the wife of a Gentleman she was too ignorant. You yourself was most to blame. You expected her to act wisely, though you never taught her that *fear of God which is the beginning of wisdom.* I owe it to you, as a friend, and to myself as a Christian to declare, that your practices in the common transactions of life, as well as your present misfortune, are almost the natural consequences of those false principles, which I protested against when you were at my* house.

Mrs. Bragwell attempted several times to interrupt Mr. Worthy, but her husband

* See Second Part of Two Farmers.

would not permit it. He felt the force of all his friend said and encouraged him to proceed. Mr. Worthy thus went on. "It grieves me to say how much your own indiscretion has contributed even to bring on your present misfortune. You gave your countenance to this very company of strollers, though you knew they were acting in defiance to the laws of the land, to say no worse. They go from town to town, and barn to barn, stripping the poor of their money, the young of their innocence, and all of their time. Do you remember with how much pride you told me that you had bespoke *The bold Stroke for a Wife*, for the benefit of this very Mr. Frederic Theodosius? To this pernicious ribaldry you not only carried your own family, but wasted I know not how much money in treating your workmen's wifes and children, in these hard times too, when they have scarcely bread to eat or a shoe on their feet. And all this only that you might have the absurd pleasure of seeing those flattering words. *By Desire of Mr. Bragwell*, stuck up in Print at the Public-house, on the Blacksmith's shed, at the Turnpike-gate, and on the Barn-door."

Mr. Bragwell acknowledged, that his friend's rebuke was but too just, and he looked so very contrite as to raise the pity of Mr. Worthy, who, in a mild voice, thus went on. "What I have said is not so much to reproach you with the ruin of one daughter, as from a desire to save the other. Let Miss Betsey go home with me. I do not undertake to be her gaoler, but I will be her friend. She will find in my daughters, kind companions, and in my wife a prudent guide. I know she will dislike us at first, but I do not despair in time of convincing her that a sober, humble, useful, pious life is as necessary to make us happy on earth, as it is to fit us for heaven."

Poor Miss Betsey, though she declared it would be *frightful dull*, and *monstrous vulgar*, and *dismal melancholy*, yet she was so terrified at the discontent and grumbling which she would have to endure at home, that she fullly consented. She had none of that filial tenderness which led her to wish to stay and sooth and comfort her afflicted father. All she thought about was to get out of the way of her mother's ill-humour, and to carry so much

finery as to fill the Miss Worthies with envy and respect. Poor girl ! She did not know that envy was a feeling they never indulged : and that fine cloaths was the last thing to draw their respect. Mr. Worthy took her home next day. When they reached his house, they found there young wilson, Miss Betsey's old admirer. She was much pleased at this, and resolved to treat him well. But her good or ill treatment now signified but little. This young Grazier reverenced Mr. Worthy's character, and since he had met him at the Lion, had been thinking what a happiness it would be to marry a young woman bred up by such a father. He had heard much of the modesty and discretion of both the daughters, but his inclination now determined him in favour of the elder.

Mr.' Worthy, who knew him to be a young man of good sense and sound principles, allowed him to become a visitor at his house, but deferred his consent to the marriage till he knew him more thoroughly. Mr. Wilson, from what he saw of the domestic piety of this family, improved daily both in the knowledge and

practice of religion, and Mr. Worthy soon formed him into a most valuable character. During this time Miss Bragwell's hopes had revived, but though she appeared in a new dress almost every day, she had the mortification of being beheld with great indifference by one whom she had always secretly liked. Mr. Wilson married before her face a girl who was greatly her inferior in fortune, person and appearance, but who was humble, frugal, meek, and pious. Miss Bragwell now strongly felt the truth of what Mr. Wilson had once told her, "that a woman may make an excellent partner for a dance, who would make a very bad one for life."

Mr. Bragwell was so much afflicted at the disgraceful marriage of his daughter, who ran off with Timothy Incle, the strolling-player, that he never fully recovered his spirits. His chearfulness which had arisen from an high opinion of himself, had been confirmed by a constant flow of uninterrupted success; and that is a sort of chearfulness which is very liable to be impaired, because it lies at the mercy of every accident and cross event in life. But though his pride was now

disappointed, his misfortunes had not taught him any humility, because he had not discovered that they were caused by his own fault ; nor had he acquired any patience or submission, because he had not learnt that all afflictions come from the hand of God to awaken us to a deep sense of our sins, and to draw off our hearts from the perishing vanities of this life. Besides, Mr. Bragwell was one of those people, who, even if they would be thought to bear with tolerable submission such trials as appear to be sent more immediately from Providence, yet think they have a sort of right to rebel at every misfortune which befalls them through the fault of a fellow-creature ; as if our fellow-creatures were not the agents and instruments by which Providence often sees fit to try or to punish us.

This imprudent daughter, Bragwell would not be brought to see or forgive, nor was the degrading name of Mrs. Incle ever allowed to be pronounced in his hearing. He had loved her with an excessive and undue affection ; and while she gratified his vanity by her beauty and finery, he deemed her faults of little con-

fequence ; but when she disappointed his ambition by a disgraceful marriage, all his natural affection only served to increase his resentment. Yet, though he regretted her crime less than his own mortification, he never ceased in secret to lament her loss. She soon found out she was undone, and wrote in a strain of bitter repentance to ask his forgiveness. She owned that her husband, whom she had supposed to be a man of fashion in disguise, was a low person in distressed circumstances. She implored that her father, though he refused to give her husband that fortune for which alone it was now too plain he had married her, would at least allow her some subsistence, for that Mr. Incle was much in debt, and she feared in danger of a gaol. The father's heart was half melted at this account, and his affection was for a time awakened. But Mrs. Bragwell opposed his sending her any assistance. She always made it a point of duty never to forgive ; " for she said it only encouraged those who had done wrong once to do worse next time. For her part she had never yet been guilty of so mean and pitiful a weakness as to forgive any one ; for to pardon an injury always shewed either

want of spirit to feel it, or want of power to resent it. She was resolved she would never squander the money for which she had worked early and late, on a baggage who had thrown herself away on a beggar, while she had a daughter single who might raise her family by a great match." I am sorry to say that Mrs. Bragwell's anger was not owing to the undutifulness of the daughter, or the worthlessness of the husband; poverty was in her eyes the grand crime. The doctrine of forgiveness, as a religious principle, made no more a part of Mr. Bragwell's system than of his wife's, but in natural feeling, particularly for this offending daughter, he much exceeded her.

In a few months, the youngest Miss Bragwell desired leave to return home from Mr. Worthy's. She had, indeed, only consented to go thither as a less evil of the two than staying in her father's house after her sister's elopement. But the sobriety and simplicity of Mr. Worthy's family were irksome to her. Habits of vanity and idleness were become so rooted in her mind, that any degree of restraint was a burthen; and though she

was outwardly civil, it was easy to see that she longed to get away. She resolved, however, to profit by her sister's faults; and made her parents easy by assuring them she never would throw herself away on a *man who was worth nothing*. Encouraged by these promises, which were all that her parents thought they could in reason expect, her father allowed her to come home.

Mr. Worthy, who accompanied her, found Mr. Bragwell gloomy and dejected. As his house was no longer a scene of vanity and festivity, Mr. Bragwell tried to make himself and his friend believe that he was grown religious; whereas he was only become discontented. As he had always fancied that piety was a melancholy gloomy thing, and as he felt his own mind really gloomy, he was willing to think he was growing pious. He had, indeed, gone more constantly to church, and had taken less pleasure in feasting and cards, and now and then read a chapter in the Bible, but all this was because his spirits were low, and not because his heart was changed. The outward actions were more regular, but the in-

ward man was the same. The forms of religion were resorted to as a painful duty; but this only added to his misery, while he was utterly ignorant of its spirit and power. He still, however, reserved religion as a loathsome medicine, to which he feared he must have recourse at last and of which he even now considered every abstinence from pleasure, or every exercise of piety as a bitter dose. His health also was impaired, so that his friend found him in a pitiable state, neither able to receive pleasure from the world, which he so dearly loved, nor from religion which he so greatly feared. He expected to have been much commended by Worthy for the change in his way of life; but Worthy, who saw that the alteration was only owing to the loss of animal spirits, and to the casual absence of temptation, was cautious of flattering him too much. "I thought, Mr. Worthy," said he, "to have received more comfort from you. I was told too, that religion was full of comfort, but I do not find much in it." You were told the truth, replied Worthy, Religion is full of comfort, but you must first be brought into a state fit to receive it before it can become so; you must be brought

to a deep and humbling sense of sin. To give you comfort while you are puffed up with high thoughts of yourself, would be to give you a strong cordial in a high fever. Religion keeps back her cordials till the patient is lowered and emptied; emptied of self, Mr. Bragwell. If you had a wound, it must be examined and cleansed, aye, and probed too, before it would be safe to put on a healing plaster. Curing it to the outward eye, while it was corrupt at bottom, would only bring on a mortification, and you would be a dead man while you trusted that the plaster was curing you. You must be, indeed, a Christian, before you can be entitled to the comforts of Christianity.—I am a Christian, said Bragwell, many of my friends are Christians, but I do not see it has done us much good.—Christianity itself, answered Worthy, cannot make us good unless it be applied to our hearts. Christian privileges will not make us Christians unless we make use of them. On that shelf I see stands your medicine. The doctor orders you to take it. “*Have you taken it?*”—Yes, replied Bragwell. Are you the better for it? said Worthy. —I think I am, he replied.—But, added

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Worthy, are you the better because the doctor has ordered it merely, or because you have also taken it?—What a foolish question, cried Bragwell. Why to be sure the doctor might be the best doctor, and his physic the best physic in the world; but if it stood forever on the shelf, I could not expect to be cured by it. My doctor is not a mountebank. He does not pretend to cure by a charm. The physic is good, and as it suits my case, though it is bitter, I take it.—You have now, said Worthy, explained undesignedly the reason why Religion does so little good in the world. It is not a mountebank; it does not work by a charm; but offers to cure your worst corruptions by wholesome, though sometimes bitter prescriptions. But you will not take them; you will not apply to God with the same earnest desire to be healed with which you apply to your doctor; you will not confess your sins to the one as honestly as you tell your symptoms to the other, nor read your Bible with the same faith and submission with which you take your medicine. In reading it, however, you must take care not to apply to yourself the comforts which are not suited to your case. You must, by

the grace of God, be brought into a condition to be entitled to the promises, before you can expect the comfort of them. Conviction is not conversion ; that worldly discontent which is the effect of worldly disappointment, is not that *godly sorrow which worketh repentance*. Besides, while you have been pursuing all the gratifications of the world, do not complain that you have not all the comforts of Religion too. Could you live in the full enjoyment of both, *the Bible would not be true.*

Bragwell now seemed resolved to set about the matter in earnest, but he resolved in his own strength ; and, unluckily, the very day Mr. Worthy took leave, there happened to be a grand ball at the next town, on account of the assizes. An assize-ball is a scene to which gentlemen and ladies periodically resort to celebrate the crimes and calamities of their fellow-creatures by dancing and music, and to divert themselves with feasting and drinking, while unhappy wretches are receiving sentence of death.

To this ball Miss Bragwell went, dressed out with a double portion of finery,

pouring out on her own head the whole
band-box of feathers and flowers her
sister had left behind her. While she was
at the ball her father formed many plans
of religious reformation; he talked of less-
ening his business, that he might have
more leisure for devotion; though not
just now, while the markets were so
high; and then he began to think of send-
ing a handsome subscription to the infir-
mary; though, on second thoughts, he
concluded he need not be *in a hurry*,
but leave it in his will, but to give,
and repent, and reform, were three things
he was bent upon. But when his daugh-
ter came home at night, so happy and so
fine, and telling how she had danced with
Squire Squeeze the great corn contractor,
and how many fine things he had said to
her, Mr. Bragwell felt the old spirit of
the world return in its full force. A mar-
riage with Mr. Dashall Squeeze, the con-
tractor, was beyond his hopes, for Mr.
Squeeze was supposed from a very low
beginning to have got rich during the war.
As for Mr. Squeeze he had picked up as
much of the history of his partner between
the dances as he desired, he was convin-
ced there would be no money wanting,
for Miss Bragwell, who was now looked

on as an only child, must needs be a great fortune, and he was too much used to advantageous contracts to let this slip. As he was gaudily dressed, and possessed all the arts of vulgar flattery, Miss Bragwell eagerly caught at his proposal to wait on her father next day. Squeeze was quite a man after Bragwell's own heart, a genius at getting money, a fine dashing fellow at spending it. He told his wife that this was the very sort of man for his daughter, for he got money like a Jew and spent it like a prince; but whether it was fairly got, or wisely spent, he was too much a man of the world to inquire. Mrs. Bragwell was not so run away with by appearances, but she desired her husband to be careful and quite sure that it was the right Mr. Squeeze, and no impostor. But being assured that Betsey would certainly keep her carriage, she never gave herself one thought with what sort of a man she was to ride in it. To have one of her daughters drive in her own coach, filled up all her ideas of human happiness. The marriage was celebrated with great splendor, and Mr. and Mrs. Squeeze set off for London, where they had a house.

Mr. Bragwell now tried to forget that he had any other daughter, and if some thoughts of the resolutions he had made of entering on a more religious course would sometimes force themselves upon him, they were put off, like the repentance of Felix, *to a more convenient season*, and finding he was likely to have a grandchild, he became more worldly and ambitious than ever, thinking this a just pretence for adding house to house, and field to field; and there is no stratagem by which men more deceive themselves than when they make even unborn children a pretence for that rapine, or that hoarding, of which their own covetousness is the true motive. Whenever he ventured to write to Mr. Worthy about the Wealth, the gaiety, and the grandeur of Mr. and Mrs. Squeezee, that faithful friend honestly reminded him of the vanity and uncertainty of worldly greatness, and the error he had been guilty of in marrying his daughter before he had taken time to inquire into the real character of the man, saying, that he could not help foreboding, that the happiness of a match made at a ball might have an end. Notwithstanding, Mr. Bragwell had paid down a larger

fortune than was prudent, for fear Mr. Squeeze should fly off, yet he was surprised to receive very soon a pressing letter from him, desiring him to advance a considerable sum, as he had the offer of an advantageous purchase, which he must lose for want of money. Bragwell was staggered, and refused to comply; but his wife told him he must not be shabby to such a gentleman as Squire Squeeze, for that she heard on all sides such accounts of their grandeur, their feasts, their carriages, and their liveries, that she and her husband ought even to deny themselves comforts to oblige such a generous son, who did all this in honour of their daughter; besides, if he did not send the money soon, they might be obliged to lay down their coach, and then she should never be able to shew her face again. At length Mr. Bragwell sent him the money on his bond: he knew Squeeze's income was large, for he had carefully enquired into this particular, and for the rest he took his word. Mrs. Squeeze also got great presents from her mother, by representing to her how expensively they were forced to live to keep up their credit and

what honour she was conferring on the family of the Bragwell's by spending their money in such grand company. Among many other letters she wrote her the following :—

“ To Mrs. Bragwell.

“ You can't imagine, dear mother, how charmingly we live—I lye a-bed almost all day, and am up all night; but it is never dark for all that, for we burn such numbers of candles all at once, that the sun would be of no use at all in London.—Then I am so happy; for we are never quiet a moment, Sundays or working-days, nay, I should not know which was which, only that we have most pleasure on a Sunday, because it is the only day in which people have nothing to do but to divert themselves.—Then the great folks are all so kind, and so good, that they have not a bit of pride, for they will come and eat and drink, and win my money just as if I was their equals; and if I have got but a cold, they are so very unhappy that they send to know how I do; and though I suppose they can't rest till the footman has told them, yet they are so

polite, that if I have been dying they seem to have forgot it next time we meet, and not to know but they have seen me the day before. Oh ! they are true friends ; and for ever smiling, and so fond of one another, that they like to meet and enjoy one another's company by hundreds, and always think the more the merrier.

Your dutiful daughter,

BETSEY SQUEEZE."

The style of her letters, however, altered in a few months. She owned that though things went on gayer and grander than ever, yet she hardly ever saw her husband, except her house was full of company, and cards, or dancing was going on ; and that he was often so busy he could not come all night, and that he always borrowed the money her mother sent her when he was going out on this nightly business ; and that the last time she had asked *him* for money, he cursed, and swore, and bid her apply to the old farmer and his rib who were made of money. This letter Mrs. Bragwell concealed from her husband.

At length on some change in public affairs, Mr. Squeeze, who had made an overcharge of some thousand pounds in one article, lost his contract; he was found to owe a large debt to government, and his accounts must be made up immediately. This was impossible, he had not only spent his large income without making any provision for his family, but had contracted heavy debts by gaming and other vices. His creditors poured in upon him. He wrote to Bragwell to borrow another sum; but without hinting at the loss of his contract. These repeated demands made Bragwell so uneasy, that instead of sending him the money, he resolved to go himself secretly to London, and judge by his own eyes how things were going on, as his mind strangely misgave him. He got to Mr. Squeeze's house about eleven at night, and knocked gently, concluding that they must needs be gone to bed. But what was his astonishment to find the hall was full of men; he pushed through in spite of them, though to his great surprise they insisted on knowing his name. This affronted him: he refused, saying, I am not ashamed of my name, it will pass for thousands in any

market in the west of England. Is this your London manners, not to let a man of my credit in without knowing his name indeed ! What was his amazement to see every room as full of card-tables, and of fine gentleman and ladies as it would hold ; all was so light, and so gay, and so festive, and so grand, that he reproached himself for his suspicions, thought nothing too good for them, and resolved secretly to give Squeeze another five hundred pounds to help to keep up so much grandeur and happiness. At length seeing a footman he knew, he asked him where were his master and mistress, for he could not pick them out among the company ; or rather his ideas were so confused with the splendour of the scene, that he did not know whether they were there or not. The man said that his master had just sent for his lady up stairs, and he believed that he was not well. Mr. Bragwell said he would go up himself and look for his daughter, as he could not speak so freely to her before all that company. He went up and knocked at the chamber door, and its not being opened; made him push it with some violence. He heard a bustling noise within, and a-

gain made a fruitless attempt to open the door. At this the noise increased, and Mr. Bragwell was struck to the heart at the sound of a pistol from within. He now kicked so violently against the door that it burst open, when the first sight he saw was his daughter falling to the ground in a fit, and Mr. Squeeze dying by a shot from a pistol which was dropping out of his hand. Mr. Bragwell was not the only person whom the sound of the pistol had alarmed. The servants, the company, all heard it, and all ran up to this scene of horror. Those who had the best of the game took care to bring up their tricks in their hands, having had the prudence to leave the very few who could be trusted, to watch the stakes, while those who had a prospect of losing, profited by the confusion and threw up their cards. All was dismay and terror. Some ran for a surgeon, others examined the dying man, while some removed Mrs. Squeeze to her bed, while poor Bragwell could neither see nor hear, nor do anything. One of the company took up a letter which lay open upon the table addressed to him, they read it, hoping it might explain the horrid mystery. It was as follows :

" To Mr. Bragwell.

" SIR,

" Fetch home your daughter, I have ruined her, myself, and the child, to which she every hour expects to be a mother. I have lost my contract. My debts are immense. You refuse me money : I must die then ; but I will die like a man of spirit. They wait to take me to prison, I have two executions in my house ; but I have ten card tables in it. I would die as I have lived. I invited all this company, and have drank hard since dinner to get primed for the dreadful deed. My wife refuses to write to you for another thousand, and she must take the consequences. *Vanity* has been my ruin. It has caused all my crimes. Whoever is resolved to live beyond his income is liable to every sin. He can never say to himself, thus far shalt thou go and no farther. *Vanity* led me to commit acts of rapine, that I might live in splendor ; vanity makes me commit self-murder, because I will not live in poverty. The new philosophy says, that death is an eternal sleep ; but the new philosophy lies.

Do you take heed : It is too late for me.
 The dreadful gulph yawns to swallow me
 —I plunge into perdition. There is no
 repentance in the grave, no hope in hell.

Your's

DASHALL SQUEEZE."

The dead body was removed, and Mr. Bragwell remaining almost without speech, or motion, the company began to think of retiring, much out of humour at having their party so disagreeably broken up ; they comforted themselves, however, that as it were *so early*, for it was now scarcely twelve, they could finish their evening at another party or two ; so completely do habits of *pleasure*, as it is called, harden the heart, and steel it not only against virtuous impressions, but against natural feelings. Now it was, that those who had nightly rioted at the expence of those wretched people were the first to abuse them. Not an offer of assistance was made to this poor forlorn woman ; not a word of kindness or of pity, nothing but censure was now heard. Why must those upstarts ape people of quality ? though as

long as these upstarts could feast them, their vulgarity and their bad character had never been produced against them.

" As long as thou dost well unto thyself, men shall speak good of thee." One guest who, unluckily, had no other house to go to, coolly said, as he walked off, —Squeeze might as well have put off shooting himself till the morning. It was monstrous provoking that he could not wait an hour or two.

As every thing in the house was seized, Mr. Bragwell prevailed on his miserable daughter, weak as she was, next morning to set out with him for the country. His acquaintance with polite life was short, but he had seen a great deal in a little time. They had a slow and a sad journey. In about a week, Mrs. Squeeze lay-in of a dead child, she herself languished a few days and then died ; and the afflicted parents saw the two darling objects of their ambition, for whose sakes they had made *too much haste to be rich*, carried to the land where all things are forgotten. Mrs. Bragwell's grief, like her other passions was extravagant ; and poor Bragwell's sorrow was rendered so

bitter by self-reproach, that he would quite have funk under it, had he not thought of his old expedient in distress, that of sending for Mr. Worthy to comfort him. It was Mr. Worthy's way, to warn people of those misfortunes which he saw their faults must needs bring on them, but not to reproach, or desert them when the misfortunes came. He had never been near Bragwell, during the short, but flourishing reign of the Squeezes; for he knew that prosperity made the ears deaf, and the heart hard to good counsel; but as soon as he heard his friend was in trouble he set out to go to him. Bragwell burst into a violent fit of tears when he saw him, and when he could speak, said, This trial is more than I can bear. Mr. Worthy kindly took him by the hand, and when he was a little composed, said, I will tell you a short story. There was in ancient times a famous man who was a slave. His master, who was very good to him, one day gave him a bitter melon, and bade him eat it; he eat it up without one word of complaint. How was it possible, said the master, for you to eat so very nauseous and disagreeable a fruit? The slave replied, My good master, I have

received so many favours from your boun-
ty, that it is no wonder if I should once
in my life eat one bitter melon from your
hands. This generous answer so struck
the master, that the history, says he, gave
him his liberty. With such submissive
sentiments, my friend, should man re-
ceive his portion of sufferings from God,
from whom he receives so many blessings.
You in particular have received much
good at the hand of God, shall not you
receive evil also ?

To BE CONTINUED.